sources from the ancient near east

volume 2, fascicle 3

the harab myth

by

thorkild jacobsen

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SANE 2/3

The Harab Myth by *Thorkild Jacobsen*.

The "dynastic chronicle" here termed the Harab myth (CT XLVI, no. 43) presents a new theme in Mesopotamian mythology, that of succeeding generations of gods who come to power through parricide and live in incest with mother, sister or both. This copy of the text is Late Babylonian with a mixture of Assyrian and Babylonian forms. Transliteration and translation are followed by an extensive commentary which discusses several motifs germane to the reconstruction and interpretation of the myth. Sources, background and cross-cultural comparisons are also provided. The Harab myth may be briefly described as a "genealogy of cosmic moral."

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1. THE TEXT*

The myth published by Lambert and Millard in CT XLVI as No. 43 is without doubt a most unusual one.[1] Its form is peculiar, approaching closely the form of a chronicle, and peculiar is also its content, which confronts us with a theme new in Mesopotamian mythology, that of succeeding generations of gods who come to power through parricide and live in incest with mother, sister, or both. The text as we have it is Late Babylonian. It was copied, according to the colophon, from a copy from Babylon which in its turn derived from a copy from Assur. Its language seems to be Assyrian, though with a considerable admixture of Babylonian forms. We attempt first a reconstruction and translation of the text:

*The aims of the series *SANE* are normally to present texts which have already been published in critical editions, so that the emphasis is on translation and interpretation. In this fascicle we depart from the norm and offer a text which is not otherwise well known and requires therefore a different style of presentation: a full transliteration is given at the beginning, with a translation on the facing page, followed by an extensive commentary. The novelty of the subject matter, combined with the masterly treatment given it by the author, make for a very welcome new addition to our series. (Editors' note).

[1]Treated by W. G. Lambert and P. Walcot in *Kadmos* 4 (1966) p. 64 ff. The damaged last sign in the divine name from which the story takes its name (obv. 7 and 11, rev. 22') is read there as *IN*. It reconstructs as [illegible] in which tentatively we would rather like to see a slightly variant form of [illegible] *RAB*, reading the divine name as ^{d}*Ha-rab*(?) rather than ^{d}*Ha-in*(?). See also p. 21f. below with note 9.

1.1. Transliteration

Obv. 1 [^{d}*Ha-rab*(?)] *i-na re-e*[*š šur-ri-i Erṣe*(KI)*-ta i-hu-uz-ma*]
[*bît*] ⌜*a*⌝*-bi ù bêlû*(EN)[*-ta li-ib-bu-šu ub-la*]
[*ma-a mi*]*-ih-ṣe nu-ma-*⌜*ah*⌝*-*[*ha-a*]*ṣ ha-ra-ab ma-t*[*i*]
[*i-na m*]*i-hi-iṣ har-bi-šu-nu*[?] *ú-še-eb-nu-ú Tâmta*(^{d}A-AB-BA)
5 [*ma-ia-r*]*u i-na ra-ma-n*[*i-šu-nu*] *ú-li-du Sumuqan*(^{d}AMA-⌜GAN⌝- [DÙ])
[*bît tu-k*]*u-ul-ti-šú* ^{URU}*Du-*[*u*]*n-nu sa-a-te*(!) *ib-nu-ú ki-lal-*⌜*la*⌝
[^{d}*Ha-r*]*ab*(?) *bêlû* (EN)*-ta ina* ^{URU}*Du-un-nu a-na ra-ma-ni-šú ú-zak-ki-ma*
[*Erṣe*(KI)*-tu*]*a-na Sumuqan*(^{d}AMA-GAN-DÙ) *ṣiher* (DUMU)*-šú pa-na iš-ši-ma*
⌜*al*⌝*-ka-am-ma lu-ra-am-ka taq-bi-i-šu*
10 *Sumuqan* (^{d}AMA-[GAN-DÙ] *Erṣe*(KI)*-ta um-ma-šu i-hu-uz*⌜*-ma*⌝
^{d}*Ha-ra*[*b*(?) *a-ba-š*]*u* *i-du-uk*[*-ma*]
i-na ^{URU}⌜*Du-un*⌝*-nu šá i-ra-am-mu uš-ni-il*[*-šu*]
ù Sumuqan (^{d}AMA-GAN-DÙ) *bêlû* (EN) *-ta ša a-bi-*⌜*šu*⌝ [*il*]*-qé*[*-e*]
Tâmta(^{d}A-AB-BA) *a-ha-as-su rabî*(⌜GAL⌝)-⌜*ta*⌝ [*i-h*]*u-uz*
15 *Gaiu*(^{d}U$_8$) *ṣiher*(TUR) *Sumuqan*(^{d}AMA-GAN-DÙ) ⌜*il*⌝*-li-kam*[*-ma*]
Sumuqan(^{d}AMA-GAN-DÙ) *i-du-uk-ma i-na* ^{URU}*Du-un-ni*
i-na qubūr(⌜É⌝-[KI]⌜SÈ⌝<GA>) *a-bi-*[*š*]*u uš-ni-il*[*-šu*]
Tâmta(^{d}[A-AB]-⌜BA⌝) *umma*(AMA)*-*[*š*]*u* *i-hu-uz*
ù Tâmtu(^{d}A-AB-BA) *Erṣe*(KI)*-ta umma*(AMA)*-ša ta-ni*[*-ir*]
20 ⌜*i-na*⌝*Kislīmi*(ITI-GAN-GAN-È) U$_4$ 16-KAM *bêlû*(EN) *-ta ù šarrû* (LUGAL) *-ta il-qé*[*-e*]
[*Gaiu*](⌜^{d}⌝[U$_8$]) ⌜*ṣiher*⌝(⌜TUR⌝) *Gaiu*(^{d}U$_8$) ^{d}*I*$_7$*-da* ⌜*a*⌝*-ha-at ra-ma-ni-šú i-hu-u*[*z-m*]*a*
[*Gaiu*(^{d}U$_8$)*a*]*ba*([A] B-BA) *ù Tâmta* (^{d}A-AB-BA) *umma*(AMA)*-šú i-du-*[*uk-m*]*a*
[*i-na qu*]*būri*([É-K]I-SÈ-GA) *uš-ni-il-šú-nu-ti ka-am-ṣ*[*i-i*]*š*
[*ina Ṭebiti*(ITI-AB)] U$_4$ 1-KAM *šarrû*(LUGAL) *-ta ù bêlû*(EN)*-ta a-na ra-ma-ni-šú* [*iṣ-ba*]*t*
25 [*Kuš*$_x$(^{d}IŠ)[2] *ṣiher*(TUR) *G*]*aiu*([^{d}GA]-⌜A⌝-A-U$_8$) ^{d}*Ú-a-ildak a-ha-as-su i-h*[*u-uz-m*]*a*
[*úr-qí-it*] *er-ṣ*[*e*]*-te* *ú-de-e*[*š-ši*]
[*re-eš supūri* (AMAŠ) *ù*] ⌜*tarbāṣi*⌝ ([T]ÙR) *ú-ke-e*[*l*]
[*a-na pa-t*]*a-an ab-bi-e ù n*[*a-ma-aš-še-e*]
[*ù re-eš*] *er-š*[*i-i*]*t a-na er*(!)*-ši-it ilī* (DINGIR-MEŠ) *ú*[*-ke-el*]
30 [*GAIU* (^{d}U$_8$) *ù*]^{d}*I*$_7$-⌜*da*⌝ *umma* (AMA)*-šu i-du-u*[*k-ma*]
[*i-na qubūri*(É-KI-SÈ-GA)] *ú-šá-ši-ib-šú-nu*[*-ti*][4]
[*i-na Šabaṭi* (ITI-ZÌZ-A) U$_4$ x-KAM]*bêlû*(EN)*-ta ù šarru*(LUGAL)*- ta a-na ra-ma-ni-šu i*[*l-qé-e*]
[^{d}*Ha-har-num ṣiher*(TUR) *Ku*]*š*$_x$([^{d}I]Š) ^{d}*Bêlet-ṣêri*(^{D}NIN-GEŠTIN-NA) *a-ha-*[*a*]*s-su i-h*[*u-uz-ma*]
[*Kuš*$_x$(^{d}IŠ) *ù*] ^{d}*Ú-a-ildak umma*(AMA)*-*[*š*]*u i*[*-du-uk-ma*]
35 [*i-na qubūri*(É-KI-SÈ-GA)]*ú-šá-š*[*i*]*-ib-šú-n*[*u-ti*]
[*i-na Adda*]*ri* ([ITI-ŠE-KIN-K]UR$_5$) U$_4$ 16-KAM (var. U$_4$ 29-KAM) *šarrû*(LUGAL)*-ta bêlû*(EN)*-ta* [*il-qé-e*]
[^{d}*Ha-a-a-šum*] *ṣi-he-er* ^{d}*Ha-har-ni*[*-im*]
⌜^{d}X *a-h*]*a-at ra-ma-ni-šu i-hu*[*-uz*]

[2]For the reading *kuš*$_x$ of *IŠ* in ^{a}*IŠ* and in the meaning *kizû* "herdsman" see B. Landsberger MSL 3.193 and 9.116.
[3]Landsberger in a letter suggested reading [*b*]*i-š*[*i-i*]*t* "property".
[4]*ušašib* for *ušêšib* is an Assyrianism.

1.2. Translation

Obv. (1) [Harab,] in the first [beginnings, took Earth to wife,]
[to (found) a f]amily and (exercise) lordship [his heart urged him:]
"We will cut furrows in the wasteland of the country!"
[By] ploughing with their soilbreaking plough they caused Sea to be created,
(5) [the fur]rows by [the]mselves gave birth to Sumuqan.
His stro[nghold,] Dunnu (the city) of yore they built, the two of them.
[Har]ab gave himself clear title to the lordship in Dunnu, but
[Earth] lifted (her) face to Sumuqan, his son,
and said to him: "Come, let me love thee!"
(10) Sumu[qan] took Earth, his mother, to wife, and
Harab, [his father,] he killed, and
in Dunnu, which he loved, he laid [him] to rest;
also, Sumuqan [t]ook over the lordship of his father, and
Sea, his older sister, [he to]ok to wife, but
(15) Gaiu, the son of Sumuqan, came, and
killed Sumuqan, and in Dunnu
in the mausoleum of his father he laid him to rest.
Sea, his mother, he took to wife;
also, Sea murdered Earth, her mother.
(20) In the month of December on the 16th day he took over the lordship
and the kingship.
[Gaiu], son of Gaiu took Idu (River), his own sister, to wife;
[Gaiu] senior and Sea, his mother, he killed, and
[in the m]ausoleum he laid them to rest together.
[In the month of January] on the 1st day [he seiz]ed the kingship and the lordship for himself.
(25) [Kush, son of G]aiu to[ok] Ua-ildak (Pasture and Poplar), his sister, to wife,
he made [the verdure] of the earth plenti[ful,]
put it at the [disposal of fold and] pen
[as fo]od for the wildlife and mo[ving (creatures)];
[also,] he p[ut] (all) neces[sities] at [the disposal] of the needs of the gods.
(30) [Gaiu and] Idu (River), his mother, he killed, and
[in the mausoleum] he made them dwell.
[In the month of February on the . . . day] he took over the lordship
and the kingship for himself.
[Haharnum, son of Ku]sh, to[ok] Bêlit-ṣêri, his sister, to wife,
[Kush and] Ua-ildak (Pasture and Poplar), his mother, he [killed], and
(35) [in the mausoleum] he made them dwell.
[In the month of Ma]rch on the 16th (var. 29th) day [he took over] the kingship
(and) lordship.
[Hayashum], son of Haharnum
to[ok X,] his own [si]ster, to wife;

[*i-na zagmukki* (ZAG-MU)] *bêlû* (EN)-*ut a-bi-šu il-qé-*⌜*e*⌝-[*ma*]
40 [*ul i-*]*duk-šú-ma b*[*al-ṭu-us-su*]
[*iṣ-ba-as-su*] ⌜*a*⌝-*na âli* (URU)-*šu pa-ad* [*a-bi-šu iq-bi-i-ma*]
[*in-na-a*]*d-*⌜*di*⌝ *ha-a*[*r-ha-re*]]

(lacuna)

Rev. (lacuna)

[^{d}*Nus*]*ku a-*[*na* . . . . .] . .]
[*ú-z*]*u-un-*[*šú-nu ip-te-e* . . . . .] . .]
[*ma*]-*a* ^{d}[*Nin-urta šarrû* (LUGAL)-*ta ù bêlû*(EN)-*ta ip-pa-aš*] .]
(5′) *an-na-*⌜*am*⌝[*i-pu-lu* . . . . .]
ù Šarrat[-*Nippuri*(^{d}UN-⌜GAL⌝-[EN-LÍL^{ki}]) . . . . .]
ma-a [. . . . .]
i-na k[*a-li-ni* . . . . .]
^{d}*Nin-urta šar*[*rû*(LUG[AL])-*ta ù bêlû*(EN)-*ta ip-pa-aš* . . .]
(10′) *ù* . . [. . . . .]
^{d}*En-líl* . . [. . . . .]
^{d}*Nusku* [. . . . .]
i-na qí-r[*i-ib*]*bît* . . [. . . . .]
ù ^{d}*En-líl ù* [. . . . .]
(15′) ^{d}*En-líl* . . . . .]
^{d}*Nin-urta* [*r*]*e-eš* . . [. . . . .]
[. . . . .]
[. . . .] *ba* [. . . . .]
[*a-k*]*i-it Aiari*(⌜ ITI⌝[GUD-SI-SÁ]) . . . . .]
[*ši-si-i*]*t* ^{d}*A-la*[*:a i-na -ma-ti li-iš-si*] ⌜*ṭa*⌝-[*b*]*iš*
[*kī pî*] *dup-pi gaba-ri* ⌜*Babili*⌝(K[Á-DINGIR^{ki}]) *ù Aššur*(BAL-TIL^{ki}) *šatir*(SAR)-*ma bari*(IGI-KÁR)
[^{d}*H*]*a*(?)-⌜*rab*(?)⌝ ⌜AL⌝-⌜TIL⌝

[*SANE* 2,102]

[at New Year] he took over the lordship of his father, but
(40) he did [not k]ill him; al[ive]
he seized him, and ordered his city to hold his father captive, and
he was put in cha[ins.]

(lacuna)

Rev. (lacuna)

[Nus]ku to . . . . .
[he inf]ormed [them . . .
[say]ing: ["Ninurta will exercise the kingship and the lordship . .]
"Yes" [answered . . . .
5′ and Sharrat-[Nippuri . . . .
saying: [" . . . . .
among a[ll of us . . . .
Ninurta [will exercise] the kingship [and the lordship . . .]
and . . . [
10′ Enlil . . . [
Nusku . . . [
in the mi[dst] of the house of . . . [
and Enlil and . . [
Enlil . . . . . [
15′ Ninurta the head(?) of . . [
. . . . .
. . . .
[. . . .] the Akitu festival of the mon[th of April . . .]
The (ploughman's) [work-so]ng [let him sound] shrilly [in the country]
20′ Written [according to] a tablet which is a copy from Babylon and Assur and collated.
[(Composition beginning:) "Ha]rab". Complete.

2. RECONSTRUCTION

As will be seen the Harab myth tells in simple schematic fashion about successive generations of gods. The information given about each god centers on (1) his marriage, to mother, sister, or both, (2) his killing of father, or father and mother, and his burying them, and (3) his assumption of the lordship, or of the lordship and the kingship and its date to day and month. In addition some information of a more anecdotal nature is given for some of the gods and the fragmentary remains at the end of the myth suggest that it eventually moved from chronicle style into freer, more anecdotal narrative.

The schematic character of the text is of considerable help in attempts at reconstruction, and so we may consider in order its various statements about marriage, parricide, and assumption of rule as they bear on its reconstruction.

2.1. Marriage

The relevant passages are:

line 1. [^{d}*Ha-rab*(?)]*i-na re-e*[*š šur-ri-i Erṣe*(KI)-*ta i-hu-uz-ma*]
10. *Sumuqan*(^{d}AMA[-GAN-DÙ]) *Erṣe* (KI)-*ta um-ma-šu i-hu-uz-ma*
14. (*Sumuqan*) *Tâmta*(^{d}A–AB–BA) *a-ha-as-su rabî* (^{r}GAL^{1})-*ta*[*i-h*]*u-uz*
18. (*Gaiu*) [*Tâmta*](^{d}[A-AB]-^{r}BA^{1}) *umma*(AMA)-*šu i-hu-uz*[*-ma*]
21. [*Gaiu*($^{[d]}$[U_8])] *ṣiher*(TUR) *Gaiu*($^{d}U_8$) $^{d}I_7$-*da a-ha-at ra-ma-ni-šú i-hu u*[*z-m*]*a*
25. [*Kuš*$_x$(^{d}IŠ) *ṣiher*(TUR) *G*]*aiu*([^{d}GA]-^{r}A^{1}-A-U_8) ^{d}*Ú-a-ildak a-ha-as-su i-h*[*u-uz-m*]*a*
33. [^{d}*Ha-har-num ṣiher* (TUR) *Ku*]*š*([^{d}I]Š) ^{d}*Bêlit-ṣêri* (^{d}NIN-GEŠTIN-NA *a-ha-*[*a*]*s-su i-h*[*u-uz-ma*]
37f. [^{d}*Ha-a-a-šum*] *ṣi-he-er* ^{d}*Ha-har-ni*[*-im*]
[^{d}X *a-h*]*a-at ra-ma-ni-šu i-hu*[*-uz*]

The proposed restoration of line 1 is based on the formal expectation that the text contained a statement about the marriage of Harab to Erṣetu since such a statement about marriage is given for all of the following gods and usually introduces the sections dealing with them. It must thus be expected in line 1 which begins the section about Harab; besides the casual references to Harab and Erṣetu in lines 7-10 suggest that these two names were mentioned once already and so were familiar. That they formed a pair is indicated by the fact that they are respectively father (line 11) and mother (line 10) of Sumuqan.

From line 21 onwards the god marrying is mentioned for the first time in the narrative and so is regularly given his patronymic. In the earlier formulas–except for the one about Harab, who as ultimate ancestor has no patronymic–the god (Sumuqan, Gaiu) has already been presented and his marriage made clear before the statement of his marriage occurs. There is thus no reason to state it explicitly in that formula; in fact his own name may not be stated if it is clear from the context (line 14 (Sumuqan), and line 18 (Gaiu)).

The reconstruction [*Gaiu*(⌜d⌝[U$_8$])] *ṣiher Gaiu*(^{d}U$_8$) in line 21 is prompted by the remnants of the patronymic in the following section line 25 [^{d}X *ṣiher*(TUR)[^{d}Ga]-⌜*a*⌝-*a-u*$_8$ and seems supported by line 22 [^{d}*Gaiu*(^{d}U$_8$)][A]B-BA which seems to distinguish the first Gaiu as "senior", literally "the father". That the myth should list a father and son of the same name is, of course, curious, and one might surmise that a single figure has here been split into two for some extraneous reason of arrangement. In this connection it is of note that the two Gaiu's occur at a point of transition between marriage to both mother and sister, as in the case of Sumuqan, and marriage to sister only, as in the case of the gods following Gaiu. If Gaiu is originally only one single figure he would have followed his father Sumuqan's example and married both his mother and his sister. Split into a senior and a junior Gaiu the senior Gaiu is given his mother only, the junior Gaiu his sister only for wife, thus providing a transition to the following series of monogamous sister marriages.

The restoration [*Kuš*$_x$(^{d}IŠ)] in line 25 is of course uncertain. It is prompted by the fact that only one sign can be accommodated in the lacuna and that among the sons of Gaiu listed in *An:Anum* (KAV 172 ii.11 cf. 179 ii 12) only one, *Kuš*$_x$(^{d}IŠ), is written with a single sign.

The restoration [^{d}*Ha-har-num*] in line 33 is based on the occurrence of that name in the patryonymic of the next following section in line 37.

Outside our text the god Haharnum is mentioned in the myth about Marduk and his sojourn in the land of Hatti treated by Güterbock in ZAnF VIII (42. 1934) p. 79ff. This myth begins with an enumeration of gods to whom Marduk supposedly tells his story, but the enumeration, rather inconsistently, includes Marduk's own name; it reads: ^{d}*Ha-har-num* ^{d}*Ha-a-a-šum*, ^{d}*A-nu-um* ^{d}*En-líl*, ^{d}*Nu-dím*[*-mud*]-^{d}*E-a*, ^{d}*Marduk*(^{d}[Š]ID(?)) ^{d}*Nabû*(AG)-*um*. It would seem, therefore, that the storyteller here unthinkingly used an existing standard enumeration, and that accords with the fact that the enumeration clearly has its own rationale independent of the Marduk story; it is a divine genealogy listing the names in descending order from father to son, as is clear from the sequence Anum, Enlil, Ea, Marduk, Nabûm. Recognition of the genealogical character of the enumeration introducing the Marduk myth lays to hand that Haharnum and Haiashum, who begin it, were father and son and we may accordingly restore the name of Haharnum's son in line 37 of the Harab myth as [^{d}*Ha-a-a-šum*] *ṣi-he-er* ^{d}*Ha-har-ni*[*-im*] as we have done above.

2.2. Parricide

The relevant passages are:

line 11. (*Sumuqan*) ^{d}*Ha-ra*[*b*(?) *a-ba-š*]*u i-du-uk*[*-ma*]
12. *i-na* URU⌜*Du-un*⌝*-nu šá i-ra-am-mu uš-ni-il*[*-šu*]
16. (*Gaiu*) *Sumuqan*(^{d}AMA-GAN-DÙ) *i-du-uk-ma i-na* URU*Du-un-ni*
17. *i-na qubūr*([É-[KI]-⌜SÈ⌝-<GA>) *a-bi-*[*š*]*u uš-ni-il*[*-šu*]
19. *ù Tamtu*(^{d}A-AB-BA) *Erṣe*(KI)*-ta umma*(AMA)*-ša ta-ni*[*-ir*]

22. (*Gaiu*) [*Gaiu*($^{d}U_{8}$) *a*]*ba*([A]B-BA) *ù Tâmta*(^{d}A-AB-BA) *umma*(AMA)-*šú i-du*[*-uk-m*]a
23. [*i-na qu*]*būri*([É-K]I-SÈ-GA) *uš-ni-il-šú-nu-ti ka-am-ṣ*[*i-i*]*š*
30. (*Kuš*$_{x}$) [*Gaiu*($^{d}U_{8}$) *ù*]$^{d}I_{7}$-⌜*da*⌝ *umma*(AMA)-*šu i-du-u*[*k-ma*]
31. [*i-na qubūri*(É-KI-SÈ-GA)] *ú-šá-ši-ib-šú-n*[*u-ti*]
34. (Haharnum)[*Kuš*$_{x}$(^{d}IŠ) *ù*] ^{d}*Ú-a-ildak umma*(AMA)-[*š*]*u i*[*-du-uk-ma*]
35. [*i-na qubūri*(É-KI-SÈ-GA)] *ú-šá-š*[*i*]*-ib-šú-n*[*u-ti*]
40. (Haiašum Haharnum) [*ul i-*]*duk-šú-ma b*[*al-ṭu-us-su*]
41. [*iṣ-ba-as-su*] ⌜*a*⌝*-na âli*(URU)*-šu pa-ad*[*a-bi-šu iq-bi-i-ma*]
42. [*in-na-a*]*d-*⌜*di*⌝ *ha-a*[*r-ha-re*]

As will be seen the formula changes slightly according to whether it reports the killing of a father only (lines 11-12, 16-17), a mother only (line 19), or both father and mother (lines 22-23, 30-31, 34-35). The verb used is *iduk* except in line 19 which reports Tâmtu's killing of her mother Erṣetu. Whether the change to *tanir* here is in some way semantically conditioned, and the verb *nâru* more suitable to reporting a killing by a woman, is not clear.[5] In the description of the burial the formulas down to lines 22-23 use the verb *ušnîl* "laid to rest" and then change to *ušâšib* "made sit, dwell". Here too the implication of the change of language escapes us. In the case of lines 40-42 the suffixed form [. . . *i-*]*duk-šú-ma* in line 40 suggests a change from the standard statement about parricide; moreover, it makes the restoration of a proper name before the verb awkward. We have therefore assumed that the text here records a break with earlier customs, that Haharnum was not put to death but—in a mythopoeic play on his name Haharnum—was merely put in chains, *harhare, hahhare.* We restore therefore as indicated.

2.3. Assumption of Rule

The relevant passages are:

line 7. [^{d}*Ha-ra*]*b*(?) *bêlû*(EN)*-ta i-na* ^{URU}*Du-un-nu a-na ra-ma-ni-šú ú-zak-ki-ma*
13. *ù Sumuqan*(^{d}AMA-GAN-DÙ) *bêlû*(EN)*-ta ša a-bi-šu* [*il-*]*qé*[*-e*]
20. (Gaiu) ⌜*i-na*⌝ *Kislīmi*(ITI-GAN-GAN-È) U_4 *16*-KAM *bêlû*(EN)*-ta ù šarrû*(LUGAL)*-ta il-qé*[*-e*]
24. (Gaiu junior) [*ina Ṭebiti*(ITI-AB)] U_4 *1*-KAM *šarrû*(LUGAL)*-ta ù bêlû*(EN)*-ta a-na ra-ma-ni-šú* [*iṣ-ba*]*t*
32. (Kuš$_{x}$) *i-na Šabaṭi*(ITI-ZÌZ-A) U_4 *X*-KAM *bêlû*(EN*-ta ù šarru*(LUGAL)*-ta a-na ra-ma-ni-šú i*[*l-qé-e*]
36. (Haharnum)[*i-na Adda*]*ri* ([ITI-ŠE-KIN-K]UR$_5$) U_4 *16*-KAM (var. U_4 *29*-KAM) *šarru* (LUGAL)*-ta bêlû*(EN) *-ta* [*il-qé-e*]
39. [*i-na zagmukki* (ZAG-MU)] *bêlû*(EN)*-ut a-bi-šu il-qe-*⌜*e*⌝*-*[*ma*]

The formulae for assumption of rule show a considerable degree of variation. The verb of the formula in line 7 is *uzakki,* in line 24 seemingly *iṣbat,* while the other occurrences

[5]The connotations of *nêru* are "stabbing", "piercing" as with a dagger; those of *dâku*, "smite", "bludgeon", suggest greater force.

all seem to use *ilqe*. The phrase *ana ramānišu* "for himself" occurs in lines 7, 24, and 32 but not in lines 13, 20, 36, and 39. Whether it has some special significance is not clear. The office assumed is "the lordship" (*bêlû*(EN)-*ta*) in line 7, "the lordship of his father" (*bêlû*(EN)-*ta ša a-bi-šu* and *bêlû*(EN)-*ut a-bi-šu*) in lines 13 and 39, "the lordship and kingship" (*bêlû*(EN)-*ta ù šarrû*(LUGAL)-*ta*) in lines 20 and 32 and, reversing the order "the kingship (and) lordship" in lines 24 and 36.

Specific dating of the assumption of rule is given in lines 20, 24, 32, 36 and 39 but not in lines 7 and 13.

The dating, when it occurs, is by day and month, but not by year; nor is there any statement of length of any rule in years so that one gains the impression that the mythical happenings take place from month to month in a single, perhaps primeval, year. This fits well with the fact that the occurring datings by month can plausibly be restored as following the regular order of months in the year: ITI-GAN-GAN-È (1.20), [ITI-AB](1.24), [ITI-ZÌZ-A](1.32) and [ITI-ŠE-KIN-K]UR$_5$ (1.36). The restoration in line 36 is indicated by the preserved remnants of the last sign, the restoration [ITI-ZÌZ-A] in line 32 is favored by the fact that description of the reign of *Kuš*$_x$ who assumed rulership in that month and proceeded to make pasture plentiful, fits so precisely with the appearing of vegetation and pasture in the desert in ITI-ZÌZ-A.

If the suggestion that the myth moves through the year is correct we should obviously place the assumption of rulership of Harab (1.7) and Sumuqan (1.13), for which no day and month are given, earlier in the year than the 16th of ITI-GAN-GAN-È, the first specific date given. If we allow a month to each of these rulers we get back to ITI-DU$_6$-KU for Harab, which takes us to a major division-point of the agricultural year, the beginning of winter, as beginning-point of our myth and, incidentally, to the month of the ancestral gods. It also places Harab's ploughing with the soil-breaking plough (lines 3-5) at the proper time of year, just before, and perhaps extending into, "the month in which the ploughing teams are disbanded," ITI-APIN-DU$_8$-A. Ploughing with the soil-breaking plough is attested for that month (See Landsberger, MSL I p. 360 note 2). The reason why no specific dating by day and month is given for Sumuqan's assumption of rule may conceivably be that the powers he represents, and those of his predecessor Harab, may have overlapped in time—we would assume the wildlife (Sumuqan) gradually moving into the ploughed fields as the ploughing teams (Harab) were withdrawn—so that a fixed day for one taking over from the other may have been difficult to set.

The reason that no day and month is given for the assumption of lordship by Haiashum is perhaps a different one, for in the calendric framework of the myth it would appear likely that Haiashum, whose name would seem to mean "the hurryer", ruled only briefly at the end of ITI-ŠE-KIN-KUR$_5$ so that the following new year *Zagmukku*(ZAG-MU) in *Nisan* (ITI-BARA-ZAG-ĜAR) which is elsewhere called the "good beginning of Anu and Enlil", could be reserved for the rule of these two gods and the next following month, ITI-GUD-SI-SÁ, the month of Ninurta, for the latter's taking over.

2.4. Anecdotal Matter

In addition to the schematic information about marriage, parricide, and assumption of rulership the myth presents from time to time narrative elaborations. Such elaborations occur in the account of Harab (lines 2-6), in the account of Sumuqan (lines 8-9), in the account of $Kuš_x$ (lines 21-29), and in the largely unintelligible closing parts of the story. We may consider them in the order in which they occur in the text:

(a) Harab. Lines 2-6. Only three complete signs remain of line 2: *-bi ù* EN. We base our reconstruction on the likelihood that EN here as everywhere else in this text will have been part of the word (*bêlû*(EN)-*ta*. However, since Harab's assumption of lordship (*bêlû*(EN)-*ta*) is not told until line 7, a mention of it already in line 2 is most easily accounted for in a context of intention or wish on his part. A following phrase such as *li-ib-bu-šu ub-la* is thus suggested. The signs *-bi ù*, which precede EN, further indicate, then, that Harab's wish or intention was a twofold one, and that its first part was described by a word or phrase ending in -bi. Assuming as likely that the following lines 3-5, which describe the engendering of two children, Tâmtu and Sumuqan, and lines 6-7, which describe the building of the city Dunnu and Harab's assumption of lordship there, will have represented Harab's realization of his intentions or wishes, it seems natural to connect the first of these, described by the word or phrase ending in *-bi* with the first thing we are told he does, founding a family by engendering Tâmtu and Sumuqan and the second, described by EN, which we restored as *belu*(EN)-*ta* "lordship" with the second thing he does, building Dunnu and exercising lordship there. We accordingly restore [*bît*]⌜*a*⌝-*bi* "family", "father's house" at the beginning of line 2.

The restorations in lines 3-5 are suggested by the context of technical expressions connected with the use of the soil-breaking plough (^{ĜIŠ}*har-bu*): *mihṣē mahāṣu, mihiṣ harbi* and *maiāru.*

The broken [. . .].*-ul-ti-šu* in line 6 must have represented a word or phrase with which ^{URU}*Du-un-nu,* literally "fortress" could naturally stand in apposition; the most obvious restoration would appear to be [*bît tu-k*]*u-ul-ti-šu* "his stronghold".

Difficult are the signs following ^{URU}*Du-un-nu.* We have read *ṣa-a-te*(!) assuming that the sign UD derives, through a slightly broken version from an original TE and that the slight traces of a sign given by the text before ZA may be interpreted as accidental scratches. If such is not the case space seems to allow only for a very narrow sign, most likely A. While a reading *ṣa-a-te*(!) "of yore" yields, perhaps, the more attractive meaning a reading ⌜*a*⌝-*ṣa-a-te*(!) "bastions" acc. pl. of *aṣîtu* (See Meissner AS 4 p. 30) would not seem impossible if one may assume that two bastions were a prominent feature of the city: "His stronghold Dunnu, both of the bastions, they built."

(b) Sumuqan. Lines 8-9. The restoration KI-*tu* at the beginning of line 8 seems indicated since lines 8-9 are clearly introductory to the statement of Sumuqan's marriage to his mother Erṣetu (KI-*ta*) in line 10. The form *iš-ši-ma* at the end of line 8 rather than

expected *taš-ši-ma* is probably a lapse into Babylonian by a Babylonian copyist.

(c) $Kuš_x$. Lines 26-29. The restoration is relatively free; it is prompted by the motif of abundant pasture suggested by *ú-de-e*[*š-ši*] and by the name of the goddess ^{d}*Ú-a-ildak* "Pasture and Poplar" in the preceding line 25.

(d) Reverse. The preserved section is so badly damaged that little reconstruction is possible. Tentatively we assume that lines 2′-4′ recorded a speech by Nusku, perhaps as representative of Enlil, to a group of gods in Nippur–presumably the assembly of the gods–proposing Ninurta's kingship and that lines 5′-10′ reported their assenting answer..

3. INTERPRETATION

As it stands, the story with which we have been dealing may be described briefly as a dynastic chronicle telling how a certain Harab built a city Dunnu, assumed lordship there and founded a dynasty in which son followed father, coming to power in extraordinary patterns of parricide and incest with mother and sister.

A special perspective for interpreting the meaning of this curious chronicle is given, however, with the fact that all the members of the dynasty are gods; we are dealing with a myth, therefore; and that the line of successive ruling generations seems to lead down to Enlil and his son Ninurta. The lordship of which the story tells would thus seem to be that held by Enlil in the storyteller's own day, that is, lordship over the cosmos as a whole, and the gods and events told about would all antedate Enlil, reaching back into the dark and remote ages before the present generation of gods and the present world order came into being.

From this general viewpoint then, a myth about older ages and gods, we may look at the events the story presents to us and ask what may be meant by the recurrent motifs of divine marriage and divine death, and by the extraordinary deviant forms of incest and parricide they assume in the story.

Rather clear is the meaning of the motif of marriage. As marriage in Ancient Mesopotamia had as its prime purpose the production of children so marriage as a mythological motif stands for production. Two divine powers or entities in the cosmos, the parents, produce other new powers or entities, the children. Usually the family relationship that a myth postulates will reflect some sensed general relation in character and function between the elements of the cosmos concerned and thus look toward a systematic ordering and connection of existence.

In the present myth a series such as that of "Earth" producing "Sea," who gives birth to "River," who gives birth to "Pasture and Poplar" etc. shows perhaps most clearly the cosmogonic implications of the marriage motif in the story.

More puzzling is the motif of divine death, for if the successive marriages and births in the story denote a gradual coming into being of the various powers and entities of the

cosmos, then their subsequent death would offhand seem to denote that they ceased to be, disappeared, which, since almost every cosmic power or entity born in the story is also killed in it, would rather effectively nullify the cosmic structure gradually built up. To explain such nullification in terms of lost worlds, of elements which once were part of the cosmos but have since disappeared, would be possible perhaps, if the figures of our story were all shadowy and without obvious relation to the cosmos of the storyteller's own time–one might think, for instance of the dim figures that make up the ancestors of Enlil in *An:Anum*–but such is clearly not the case here as shown e.g. by the figures of "Earth", "Sea", "River", "Pasture and Poplar" just mentioned. Surely these must have been felt by the storyteller to be elements of his own cosmos and their death can hardly have meant disappearance.

Of considerable help in understanding is here a comparison with other instances of cosmogonic myths in which the motif of the dying or even the slain god occurs, most obviously perhaps with *Enûma elish.* and its accounts of the slayings of Apsû, Tiāmat, and Kingu. Here it is clear that the death of Apsû at Ea's hand does not imply that he disappeared from creation, ceased to be, for in the Mesopotamian cosmos Apsû was still there, he was the sweet waters in the earth and could be reached if one dug a sufficiently deep well. But though he still exists, he exists, as it were, as corpse only, as inert matter. He is no longer, as he was before, an active force threatening to impose his will to stillness and calm on the universe and destroy the gods. He has been rendered harmless. Similarly with Tiāmat. After her death at Marduk's hand she continues to exist. Her watery body is up there behind the vault of heaven, held back by it and guarded. Only at openings in her eyes and udder can her waters flow forth as rivers. Again, Tiamat continues to exist, but inertly, without power to impose her will on the universe and war upon the gods who rule it and maintain its order. Kingu, lastly, also still exists, at least his blood does, for from it man was formed and so it is part of man and continues in him. But again no longer as a power and will to impose itself on the world. If we would try to characterize as precisely as possible what the slaying of a god seems to mean in *Enûma elish*, we may therefore perhaps say that it does not imply non-existence or disappearing of the entity which the god informed when he was alive, nor does it alter or interfere with its essential character and form of being: the waters of Apsû and Tiāmat remain waters, and the blood of Kingu remains (if the name Kingu may be derived from Sumerian kīg "work" and the god it denotes considered a personification of work[6]) in man, conditioning him as a worker. What the slaying of a god pragmatically achieves is rather that it renders him permanently harmless, he ceases to exist as active power able to impose his will on the gods, that is, on the world and the way it is being run.

If with this understanding we return to our story its motif of slaying of gods no longer causes any difficulty. The slain gods and what they stand for stay as part of the cosmic structure, their death merely indicates that they are no longer the deciding will in the cosmos as they were when they held the lordship. They are out of things, inactive, the lordship has passed into other hands.

[6]Another possibility is that Kingu is an incorrect derivative of *Ki-en-gi*^{ki}=*Kiengi*(r)=*Shumer* (See my *The Treasures of Darkness* (New Haven, 1976) p. 257 note 337). Both derivations may well have existed side by side without one excluding the other in the thinking of the ancients.

There remains the question of the specific, unpleasant, forms in which divine marriage and death are presented in the story: as incest and as parricide.

That these unpleasant forms are there for a purpose, were meant to convey a point, cannot be doubted, for the storyteller so obviously takes pains to ensure that they will not be lost on his listeners by constantly specifying "his mother", "his sister" or stressed "his own sister", "his father" with each marriage and killing told about.

To see what the point to be made can have been we may note first that the extraordinary tissue of unrestrained incest and parricide which the storyteller so blandly presents will certainly have appeared to his Ancient Mesopotamian listeners in every way as reprehensible, barbarous, and remote from the established order of the world in which he lived as it does to us. Secondly, as one looks more closely at the story it becomes apparent that this barbarism is not everywhere the same, the incest and parricide patterns do not remain stable but seem to change gradually through the generations and to become slightly more restrained as the story moves on toward Enlil and Ninurta and with them to the world order of the storyteller's own time. Thus in the early generations we have incest with both mother and sister (Sumuqan) and both sexes indulge in parricide, sons kill their fathers, daughter (Tâmtu) kills mother. With the son of the elder Gaiu the pattern changes somewhat. From now on there is marriage only with sister, not also with mother, and the daughters no longer kill, instead the sons kill both of their parents. This new pattern lasts down to Haiashum who seem to be the first not to kill his father, he merely puts him in chains. After Haiashum a lacuna sets in, probably covering a section about Anu and part of that about Enlil. When the story resumes the text it is in extremely fragmentary condition, but what remains seems to suggest peaceful and orderly transfer of power from Enlil to his son Ninurta confirmed by the assenting vote of other gods. It seems a fair assumption in these last sections about Anu, Enlil and Ninurta, which bring the story down to the existing world order, that the gods will finally have left behind them forever the old ways of parricide and probably also the last remaining vestige of incest, marriage to sister.

With this we would seem to have arrived at the point the story as a whole is seeking to make. In so far as it tells about the marriage and birth of gods, i.e. of powers and entities in the cosmos, it is a cosmogony, in so far as it tells us of the slaying of gods and the transfer of the lordship, of cosmic rule, to a younger generation it is an account of the successive wills that have dominated the cosmos in its various stages; and in so far as it shows a gradual change from primitive barbarous licentiousness to the existing world order it is a history of cosmic morals. As a whole and in briefest compass it may therefore perhaps more accurately be termed a mythical genealogy of cosmic morals.

4. COMPARISONS

A mythical genealogy of cosmic morals is an unexpected addition to Ancient Mesopotamian mythology and one embodying both new and original concepts.

As a mythical genealogy it has, of course, formal parallels in the mythical genealogies found at the beginnings of a great many popular incantations such as e.g. the legend of

the worm, and as a genealogy of the ruling powers in the cosmos one may naturally compare it with the long genealogies of Anu and Enlil given in *An:Anum* and elsewhere, even though they present altogether different traditions in terms of genealogical content. For the cosmogonic aspect of the genealogy presented, the introductory matter of *Enûma elish* furnishes a close parallel, and here also the motif of violence and killing of an older generation of gods by a younger one is present. In its handling of this motif, however, *Enûma elish* differs considerably from the myth here dealt with. The conflict is one between the first generation and a following five generations acting in concert and led by their youngest members, first Ea then Marduk; and the younger gods are not motivated by simple lust for power, they have to defend themselves if they are to survive. There is in *Enûma elish* relatively little emphasis on the parricidal character of the slaying of Apsû by Ea and of Tiāmat by Marduk. The distance in generations makes it almost unnoticeable. Nor is there any suggestion of an incest motif; rather, in cases such as those of Lahmu and Lahāmu, Anshar and Kishar, where the notion of son and mother marriage might well suggest itself, (Past participles, *Lahmu, Dûri* < * *Dawri,* as results, i.e. as sons, of actions, infinitives, *Lahamu, Dâri* < * *Dawāri*) the text is deliberately vague on the point of their birth and relationship: "they were made manifest" (*uštapû*) or "they were created" (*ibbanû*). With the following Anu a spouse is not even mentioned. *Enûma elish,* thus, while dealing with the birth, creation, and ordering of the powers and elements in the cosmos does only secondarily pose moral contrasts between the behavior of older and younger gods. It is, basically, a story of war and the development of effective government of the cosmos.

For any really close parallels to the myth with which we are dealing, parallels in outlook and motifs, one has to go rather far afield, to Greece and the Olympic Creation myth.[7] Here we are told that Earth, Gaia, gave birth to the sky, Uranus, who, mating with his mother, fathered the Cyclops and the Titans. At the instigation of their mother, Earth, the Titans led by Cronus attacked their father Uranus and, coming upon him as he lay asleep, Cronus castrated him with a sickle. Blood from the wound fell on Earth and fathered on her the Erinnyes, avengers of patricide. Cronus married his sister Rhea and, fearing that one of his own sons would depose him, he swallowed his children as soon as they were born until Rhea outwitted him by giving him a stone wrapt in swaddling clothes to swallow instead of her newborn son Zeus. When Zeus grew up he forced his father Cronus to disgorge his elder brothers and sisters, and became lord of the universe by vanquishing the Titans and imprisoning Cronus in Tartarus. He married Hera, his twin sister.

As will be seen there are in this myth very essential similarities with the one with which we are dealing. Here too we have a cosmogony in the form of a story of the marriage and birth of successive generations of gods, i.e. powers and entities in the cosmos; here too this purely cosmogonic motif is overshadowed by the motif of the lordship over the cosmos, for which sons vie with their fathers. Here too is the incest motif, original mother-marriage (Uranus) superceded by sister-marriage (Cronus and Zeus), and a milder

[7]See the article by Lambert and Walcot cited above in note 1. Also P. Walcot, *Hesiod and the Near East* (Cardiff, 1966).

form of the parricide motif beginning with the castration of Uranus by Cronus and progressing to the mere imprisonment of Cronus by Zeus; clearly–as the intervening birth of the Erinnyes from Uranus' blood plainly implies–intended as a signal improvement in manners.

The Olympic Creation myth is related–as was shown in detail by H. Güterbock[8]–to Phoenician and to Hittite-Hurrian materials. These latter, the "Myth of the Kingship of Heaven" was, furthermore, based on a lost Babylonian tradition the existence of which can be inferred from the Sumero-Akkadian names under which several of the leading characters appear in it. Now the very remarkable points of relation observable between the Olympic Creation myth and the myth of the Harab dynasty with which we are dealing clearly holds out a possibility, or even probability, that the latter may in fact represent, or at least belong in the tradition of, that lost Babylonian prototype. We incline to believe that it does; the parallels of tenor and motifs seem to us far too specific and far too close to be set down as mere accident, and it is therefore particularly unfortunate that the section of the text which would most directly have paralleled the Greek materials and would have been decisive for a comparison, the section dealing with Anu(=Uranus), Enlil(=Cronus) and Ninurta(=Zeus) is either lost in a lacuna or so fragmentarily preserved that little can be done with it.

If the myth with which we are dealing is tentatively to be considered the lost Babylonian source, or in the tradition of that source, one must probably also assume that the spread of the myth from Babylonia was no simple unilinear process but rather that there may have been more than one line of transmission, perhaps at different times, almost certainly developing variants and reworkings with different emphases and selection of different features of the story in adjustment to local taste and existing local mythology.

It will be seen, for instance, that all western variants begin the story at a point after Haiāshum but differ between themselves. The Hittite-Hurrian version begins with Alalu, the Phoenician with a couple, Elyun and Beruth, the Olympic Creation myth only begins after that generation with Gaia and Uranus. This raises the question whether the myth with which we are dealing contained a section on Alala preceding that on Anu, in which case it may have been the source for the Hittite-Hurrian version as it stands, or whether Alala is secondary, added to the version that spread from other sources such as e.g. *An:Anum* and related traditions, which know a couple Alala and Belili as ancestors of Anu, though at some remove. In favour of assuming that Alala and his wife Belili *were* already treated in the Harab story is perhaps the occurrences of the phrase [*ši-si-i*]*t* ^{d}*A-la*[*-la*] "The calling upon Alala", "the work-song", in the last line of the text though not too much can be built on that fact. If we may assume that, originally or secondarily, the pair Alala and Belili formed a part of the myth as it spread from Babylonia, that pair would seem to underlie–adjusted to extant local Phoenician mythology–the pair Elyun and Beruth, even though only the initial syllables of these names now testify to a connection.

Rather rigorous selection of a single motif, the violent transfer of cosmic rule, would have to be assumed for the Hittite-Hurrian version. As we have it, it ignores completely the marriage-cosmogonic aspect of the tale, omitting all reference to marriage and wives,

[8]H. Güterbock, *Kumarbi* (Zürich-New York, 1946).

and to any father-son relationship between the successive contenders for cosmic rule. In consequence also the related motifs of incest and parricide have been dropped and with them that of a gradual moral progress toward the present moral world order. What remains is a straight courtly tale of rivalry between king and cupbearer in which the latter eventually succeeds in vanquishing his master and in gaining supremacy for himself. The main concern of this version seems to be with the motif of Kumarbi's (=Enlil's, =Cronus') castration of his predecessor Anus (=Anu, =Uranus) by biting off and swallowing his genitals, Kumarbi's ensuing pregnancy, and the problem of how he, a male, should give birth.

Much more of the original complex of motifs seems to have been taken over in the Phoenician version. Here the pairs successively holding dominion are still presented as parents and children and the incest motif survives to the extent that the pairs are brother and sister pairs. The parricide motif is lost as a conscious pattern. Elyun does not die at the hand of his son "Uranus" but is killed by wild animals, "Uranus" is castrated by his son El (=Cronus) and dies from it, Adad (=Zeus) takes over rule peaceably in conformity with the will of his father El. If some remnants of the parricide motif and its implied progress toward peaceful succession to power are here still retained, it is equally clear that the meaning of the motif as tracing a development from violent to more peaceful transfer of rule has been lost sight of. Similarly the incest motif–since sister-marriage remains a constant–has clearly lost any original development aspect.

In the Greek materials, on the other hand, almost all of the original motifs and their meaning seem to survive. This is only understandable if we assume that it stems directly from one or more basic lines of tradition from which the Hittite-Hurrian and Phoenician are both eclectic variant branches, not the main stream that reached Greece.

5. SOURCES AND BACKGROUND

It seems a reasonable surmise that in composing his account of bygone cosmic ages the storyteller will have used already existing materials and that such materials, while useable for his purposes, may not all originally have had the special orientation he chose to give them. To see whether traces of such originally different orientation are still present in the materials, and to form an idea of what it may have been, we may therefore look once again at the story, its characters and its motifs–not as we have done up to now, for what they contribute to the advancing of the plot with its gradual development toward the existing moral cosmic order, but rather for what they would seem to be in themselves and for contexts intrinsic to their occurrence together.

5.1. The Gods

In seeking to form an idea of the nature and function of the deities of which the myth tells we may begin with the line of goddesses which seem relatively clear. We are told

that Erṣetu (Accusative form: KI-*ta*), "Earth" produced Tâmtu (^{d}*A-AB-BA*), "Sea", who gave birth to Idu (Accusative form: $^{d}I_{7}$-*da*), "River", who gave birth to ^{d}Ú-A-ILDAK, "Pasture and Poplar", who gave birth to Bêlit-ṣêri (^{d}NIN-GEŠTIN-NA), "The lady of the desert," who was, as her Sumerian name ^{d}Nin-geštin-na, "The lady of the grapevine" shows, like her mother a vegetation goddess. At this point the line of goddesses as we have it comes to an end, its following names are lost in a lacuna.

The cosmogonic character of the series as it stands can hardly be missed. Through conception and birth in generation after generation one major element of the cosmos after another comes into being and the direction from general cosmic features such as the earth, the sea, the rivers, to more specific ones of vegetation connected with the shepherd's life, pasture and grapevine, suggests a particular viewpoint, that of a herdsman.

The suggestion that we are dealing with a herdsman's cosmogony gains in strength when we turn to the line of male gods, for one after the other of these turns out to be connected with herd-animals and herding. The line begins with the god Harab (^{d}*Ha-rab*) whose name represents the absolute form of the word *harbu*, the Akkadian term for the team of oxen that drew the soil-breaking plough and the plough itself. Since Akkadian frequently uses the absolute form of the word for a thing to denote the god of that thing, we may confidently assume that Harab was the god of this kind of ploughing team. Parallels are Šamaš, god of the sun (*šamšu*), Lahar, goddess of the ewe (*lahru*), Nirah, god of the snake (*nirahu*), and many more. The identification of Harab as god of the soil-breaking plough lends point to what we are told about him in the story: he ploughs the wasteland of the country with the soil-breaking plough, that is, he gives expression to his own essential being.[9] Sumuqan (written ^{d}AMA-GAN-DÙ), who is mentioned next in the story, is well known as a herder-god, "shepherd of anything", and as god of fourlegged animals, wild and tame, asses, goats, gazelles. Particularly he is the power in them for fertility and propagation. After Sumuqan follow two gods, father and son, both called Gaiu. The name, usually written with the sign for "ewe" (U_8) shows that we are dealing with a god connected with sheep, and the god-list *An:Anum* lists Gaiu as the divine shepherd of the moon god Nanna. The name of the next following god is missing but may perhaps be restored as $Kuš_x$, a god listed in *An:Anum* as one of eight sons of Gaiu and, to judge from this and from his name ($Kuš_x$=IŠ=*kizû*), a divine herdsman. Of the next gods in order, Haharnum and Haiāshum, too little is known for even a guess as to their nature. They are followed after a long lacuna by Enlil, god of the hoe and Ninurta, god of the seeding plow. With him the myth comes to an end.

Considering, then, what we can know and reasonably surmise about the gods dealt with by the story it would seem that they point fairly uniformly to a herdsman's pantheon representing as they do powers particularly important in the herdsman's life and outlook: powers in and behind the various animals in the herds, oxen, goats, sheep, and powers in

[9] It seems probable that *Ha-rab*, personification of the *harbu* plow, would in time become connected by folk etymology with the venerable Cassite god *Har-be*, who is identified with Enlil in the list of Cassite personal names, but–precisely as ^{d}*Ha-ar-bu*–is said to be Anu in the Cassite Vocabulary. See K. Balkan, *Kassitenstudien* (New Haven, 1954) p. 106 f. Balkan comments: "Wenn *Harbe* in den Personennamenliste mit *Enlil* und allerdings nicht völlig gesichert im Vokabular in der Spielform [*H*]*a-ar-bu* = ^{d}*A-mu*⌊*m*⌋ gesetzt wird, so muss dies dahin interpretiert werden dass auch das Kassitische den Typus des greisen Gottes kennt (wie hurritisch *Kumarpi* phönizisch *El*), der von einer jüngeren Göttergeneration (kassitisch *Buriyaš*, hurrisch *Tešup*, phönizisch Ba'al) entthront wurde"

and behind his natural environment, the earth, the sea, the rivers, and the pasture and vegetation on which he fed his herds.

5.2. Locale

The locale of the story is specified. The events told took place in the city of Dunnu which Harab founded, here was the seat of the lordship for which the succeeding generations vied with each other, and here was the tomb or mausoleum in which the gods and goddesses were laid to rest when they had been killed by their children. It would thus seem that we are dealing with a local myth of rather limited geographical horizon, tied to Dunnum and its tomb-sanctuary. As for where this city of Dunnu is to be sought, we may turn to the date-formula for Rîm-Sîn's 30th year which mentions it as an important fortress in the defense system of the kingdom of Isin, calling it the "key" (literally "the bolt", uru^{Ki} -sag̃-mah; for sag̃-mah: *gāmiru* see CAD G *sub voce gāmiru*) to Isin, it is therefore likely to have been situated fairly close to Isin itself. These findings, that the myth is so closely tied to a provincial town in the Isin kingdom are certainly surprising in view of its pretense to universal significance as a story of bygone rulers of all of the cosmos; and even if–since gods of the Nippur pantheon occur prominently in the last section of the story–one might possibly surmise that the locale had by then shifted to Nippur, the tie to Dunnu for the substantial earlier parts of the myth would still be there. We can see no other reasonable explanation for this conflict of local and universal than to assume that the story in its origins represents a purely local tradition concerned with Dunnu and the story of the local gods of its tomb-sanctuary, a simple herdsman's cosmogony of limited geographical horizon. As to the probable age of such a local tradition and the time when it was written down and became a part of the general Mesopotamian literary tradition one can do little more than guess. The language of the story is Akkadian, but the names of the deities in it show some trace of a Sumerian background. In the case of a name like KI-*ta* it seems probable that we are dealing merely with orthography and should read it as Akkadian, *Erṣe-ta*. However, $^{d}I_{7}$-*da* is apparently the Akkadianized form of Sumerian Id and in cases like ^{d}A-AB-BA, ^{d}AMA-GAN-DÙ, ^{d}Ú-A-ILDAK and ^{d}NIN-GEŠTIN-NA it seems altogether possible that we should read the Sumerian form, as we clearly must do with Gaiu. We would not then have to assume that this simple text was deliberately written–and only in so far as these proper names are concerned–in highly esoteric Sumerographic orthography. For an Akkadian story, still showing clear contacts with Sumerian in the names of its characters, the period of Isin-Larsa would fit rather well. In this period we know that Akkadian replaced Sumerian as standard language and that Dunnu had some prominence. At that time too a combination of traditions from two of the cities in the small kingdom of Isin, Dunnu and Nippur, may have seemed natural.

5.3. The Marriage Motif

From consideration of the gods in the story, their nature, and their locale we may turn to the role they play in the incidents recorded, and to what that role suggests about

their context. We may consider first the motif of marriage. As we have already mentioned earlier, marriage had in the Ancient Mesopotamian world one primary function, that of producing children, and so, when this human form is applied to gods, that is, to personified powers in the cosmos, it will normally mean that these powers between them were thought to have produced other powers, other gods, their children. Postulation of a divine marriage thus establishes an ordered relationship between powers and entities in the cosmos, and a systematic statement of such marriages will produce an ordering of cosmic powers under the form of a cosmogony.

In the case of the myth with which we are here dealing the cosmos which it orders is, as we have seen, a limited one, a herdsman's cosmos, made up of features important to him, and we may perhaps here ask what in individual cases governed the myth in its choice of powers to be grouped as husband, wife, and children. Only in some of the cases answers suggest themselves.

Thus the initial grouping together of Harab, wielder of the soil-breaking plough, and Erṣetu, the earth, as husband and wife is rather obviously conditioned by the widespread concept of ploughing as a sexual act in which the plough is the male, the earth the female partner. This concept is well attested for Mesopotamia; one may quote e.g. the poetic designation of the seeding plough (*epinnu*) as *rāh kīdi* "impregnator of the earth" (See Landsberger, *JNES* VIII, 1949 p. 277 and the line *kīma epinnum*(ĜIŠAPIN) *er-ṣe-tam ir-hu-ú er-ṣe-tú im-hu-ru* [*zēr*]-*šú* in CT 23.10.27 and the similar *kīma* . . . *epinnum*(ĜIŠAPIN) *erṣe*(KI)-*tim ir-hu-ú erṣe*(KI)-*tim im-hu-ru zēr-šá* in Maqlû vii. 26 "As . . . the seeding-plough impregnated the earth and the earth received its seed". However, whereas the union of the seeding plough and the soil, to which these passages have reference, very obviously produces the grain-harvest, it is less immediately clear what the similar union of soil-breaking plough and soil may have been thought to produce; and so the meaning of our myth when it tells us that Tâmtu, the sea, came into being during the ploughing and that later the furrows gave birth to Sumuqan, tends to elude us although we might speculate that the flooding of the fields after the early ploughing may have prefigured to the mythmaker the coming into being of the sea, Tâmtu, and the sudden appearance of the wildlife of the desert to nibble at the first greens prefigured that of the power in it, Sumuqan. Somewhat elusive are also the meanings of most of the following groupings as far as specific implications are concerned. Generally though, it seems possible to say that the goddesses in the myth appear to take after their mothers fairly closely, that is to say, entities are thought to have produced others with similar characteristics: "River" is the daughter of another water-goddess "Sea"; the goddess of the grapevine is the daughter of another goddess of vegetation "Pasture and Poplar"; occasionally a causal relationship seems to underlie the groupings as when "Pasture and Poplar", the vegetation along the river bank, is seen as the daughter of the river which produced it. The gods in the story similarly show a common character. They are all gods of herds and herding, and the rather clearcut division into gods representing powers in the herd, and goddesses representing powers in nature, in environmental elements, may well ultimately derive from an instinctive sense in the herdsman that the powers for fertility in his herd, so familiar and all important to him, are also behind fertility in nature, its giving birth to vegetation, and ultimately even behind the primeval engendering and birth of such features as the sea and the rivers.

The common character of the gods in the story as gods of herds holds a clue also to the most singular aspect of the grouping together of powers by the myth, the incest character of its divine marriages. As powers for fertility in the herds it is difficult to imagine that these gods would not have been thought of as sharing in the animal nature and animal characteristics of the herd-animals in which they found their embodiment. And to the ancient herder the typical promiscuity of sheep and goats was well known, and seemingly not strongly condemned as may be seen from the story of the shepherd god Dumuzi given in CT XV. 26-29 in which he attempts to seduce his younger sister Gashan-dupshar by drawing her attention to the young ram mounting its mother (pl. 29.9-10) and to the billy-goat mounting its sister (pl. 29.17-18). That incestual traits were part of the typical image of these gods seems indicated in the case of Sumuqan also by the name under which he figures in the story, ^{d}AMA-GAN-DÙ. This Sumerian name would seem to mean "The one who causes the mother to be one giving birth" and is apparently only a shorter variant of the name given for the god in *An:Anum* (CT XXIV.32.113) ^{d}II(=su-mu-qa-an) ANŠE-ama-a-ni-ʿgan-dùˡ-ganá "Sumuqan of the field, who causes his mother to be one giving birth."

If we may assume, thus, that the incest motif is connected with the animal nature of the gods as powers for the fertility of the herds, it would appear to belong to these materials from the beginning even though it may have been elaborated and extended systematically when the story was recast in terms of progress from earlier barbaric, to a present moral, cosmos.

5.4. The Death Motif

The carefulness with which the story sees to it that we are told for each slain god, not only that he was buried, but where specifically he was laid to rest is an arresting feature in the economy of its narrative. Obviously this information must have had special point for the narrator and his listeners. The closest parallels to such information we know of outside our story are the litanies of the Damu cult in which Damu and his various incarnations, divine and human, are named in order, each with specific indication of where he lies buried, on the pattern: "Since in Gishbanda, the land of laments, Ningishzida is laid to rest, since in Girsu, in the house of assembly, the lad Damu is laid to rest, since in the cup-bearer's house of the little bronze-cups Alla, lord of the net, is laid to rest etc." (de Genouillac, *Premières Recherches Archeologiques à Kish* No. D. 41.i24′-29′). In the context of these litanies the mention of the place where the god lies buried is immediately understandable. These gods are fertility gods of the dying god type who were thought to be among the living only during the brief part of the year when their special power manifested itself in nature, the rest of the year they were assumed to be dead and to dwell in the Nether World. They continued to be worshiped, however, as powers for fertility in the ground, and this worship took the form of offerings and libations at their tombs in their sanctuaries similar to those accorded less illustrious dead. The mention of the place where the god lies in the litany is thus a mention of the place where contact with him is still possible, his place of worship.

If we may assume for the parallel statements of where the dead gods were laid to rest in our story a similar original context we are led to assume that the divine mausoleum or

tomb mentioned was an extant place of worship in Dunnu, known and familiar to the original listeners, and that it was this concrete tie with their everyday world that gave this feature its special interest for them. That the gods of the story were in fact fertility gods of the dying god type is, if not provable, at least very likely. In the case of Sumuqan we know him as a fertility god and as dwelling in the Nether World, in the case of Gaiu a variant reading in *An:Anum* makes him the shepherd, not of the moon god Nanna but of ^{d}En-nu-gi$_4$, the lord of the Nether World, and as a shepherd-god he is likely to have been similar in character to other shepherd-gods, such as the better known Dumuzi, who belongs to the dying god type. In the case of Harab the limited seasonal appearance of the soil-breaking plough with which he is associated in the myth makes his absence during the rest of the year likely. Similar cases could perhaps be made out for other figures in the story.

The suggestion that the gods of the story were fertility gods of the dying god type, powers in seasonal phenomena who died and went to the Nether World for the rest of the year, would go a considerable way toward explaining the presence of the death motif in the story. The fertility god is as a rule, and naturally, envisaged as adult and young, so that his death, after a brief, seasonally conditioned span of time is likely to be given mythological form as a violent death, a slaying, as is typically the case e.g. with the shepherd god Dumuzi. The motif of the slain gods in the story may therefore have close connection with the character of these gods and may be original in the materials.

5.5. The Succession Motif

In the section dealing with the reconstruction of the formulaic statements about assumption of rule in the story we considered in some detail the temporal framework of the myth and found that it seems to move from month to month through the year, beginning at the beginning of winter. In so doing we also discussed the fairly apparent relationship which seems to exist between the character of certain of the gods and the time of year in which the myth placed their reign. Harab, the god who first used the soil-breaking plough, would reign from the beginning of the month of DU$_6$-KÙ to or into that of APIN-DU$_8$-A, that is, during the time of year when the soil-breaking plough is in use. His reign would end with the month of APIN-DU$_8$-A, the month of disbanding the plough-team. In similar fashion Kuš$_X$ and his wife Úa-ildak, "Pasture and Poplar" reign in the month of ZÌZ-A and are said to have made pasture and vegetation plentiful. The month of ZÌZ-A is precisely the month when vegetation and pasture begin to sprout forth in the desert. We have mentioned the two clearest cases only, but following the lead they give it would seem consistent to interpret Sumuqan's replacement of Harab and his taking over his dominion in terms of the wildlife of the desert, Sumuqan's special charges, moving into the newly ploughed fields as the ploughs are gradually disbanded and withdrawn; and since we know that sheep were later on pastured on the vegetation that sprang up in the furrows of the soil-breaking plough, Gaiu, the shepherd's replacing Sumuqan and taking over from him may stand for the appearance of the shepherds and sheep in the fields and the consequent withdrawal of the wild animals into the desert.

If this way of interpreting the myth may be considered valid the myth deals in essence with the sequence of activities and features dominating the scene as the seasons and the year progress. One such activity or feature, one such god, dominates for a time to give way to the next which inexorably supplants it. In such a framework, given the motif of violent death of each of these gods, a mythopoeic formulation of the succession as a slaying of the older by the younger ruler, as a series of parricides, seems not unlikely. Also, as the story follows the cosmos of the herdsman through the seasons, as features of it fade away and new features come into being, it is not difficult to imagine that this yearly cycle of death and birth may have been seen as reflection and cyclic repetition of the manner in which the cosmos first came to be and grew.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In trying to sum up we may say, thus, that the myth about Harab and his dynasty would seem to represent, or to belong in the tradition of, the lost Babylonian source for the Hittite-Hurrian myth of the Kingship of Heaven, the Phoenician creation story, and the Greek Olympic Creation myth, each of these retelling only the last parts of the original story and each selecting different aspects and motifs from it. Closest to the source seems the Greek version.

As it stands the myth tells of the marriages and births of gods who represent major powers and entities of the cosmos and is in that sense a cosmogony; it also tells how succeeding generations of gods took over rule of the cosmos and is in that sense a story of the wills which during its different stages dominated and conditioned the cosmos; the myth shows, furthermore, a gradual change from early barbarous indulgence in parricide and incest to somewhat more restrained divine conduct and is in that sense a history of cosmic morals. Briefly it may therefore be described as a "genealogy of cosmic morals."

As to its background and sources, internal evidence appears to suggest that the author based himself on an earlier local cosmogony from Dunnum near Isin which saw the change of the seasons and their dominant features as reflecting cyclically the manner in which the cosmos first—and repeatedly year for year—came into being. As universal fertilizing principle the herdsman posited the powers for fertility in his herds, a succession of male gods of herds and herding; and as impregnated by them and giving birth, a succession of personified environmental cosmic elements, goddesses of earth, sea, rivers, pasture. Their succession through the season he interpreted as the killing off of each generation by the next in a relentless drive for power and dominance.

As to the age of the story we can do little more than guess. The original local tradition may conceivably have entered the general literary tradition of Mesopotamia already in the Isin-Larsa period. It is likely to have been given its present form as a story of earlier generations of gods before the middle of the second millennium to allow for its spread to the Hittites shortly afterwards.

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